

## The History of the Order of Elks.

Never were truer words spoken than those uttered by the plumed knight of platform oratory, Roscoe Conklin, in his wonderfully eloquent nominating speech, during the session of the Republican convention at which James G. Garfield passed under the wire in advance of the record-breakers entered in the Presidential race.

While the immense audience sat silently awaiting the first words to drop from the lips of the great past master of the political arena, Conklin stood for a moment silently gazing at the sea of faces raised expectantly, and then in magnetic tones rang out the words never to be forgotten by those who listened to his impassioned address:

"The shallows murmur while the deeps are silent."

Today the great newspapers of the world are filled with bombastic chatterings eulogizing the kings of finance who play to the galleries of the world, with gifts for colleges, libraries and other educational interests. Giving that their gifts may be known of men.

The Benevolent Protective Order of Elks follow the precepts and practice of the lowly Nazarene, and let not their right hand know what the left doeth. Charity, love for their fellow man, unobtrusive generosity and brotherly love are the mile stones which mark the progress of this grand order from its inception in the year 1867, when a young actor, Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian, just landed from British soil, conceived the idea of organizing in the city of New York the forerunner of the noble order of Elks, under the name of the "Jolly Corks." The founder of the order was elected the first imperial cork. There were fifteen charter members, all actors, of whose number six have since passed over the great divide.

The new organization grew and flourished and after casting around for a more appropriate name with which to dignify the growing organization, it was decided after some of the members had visited Barnum's old museum and studied the characteristics of the great American Wapiti, commonly known as the Elk, that no name could be so appropriately applied to an order which had for its goal all that was best, cleanest and noblest in its creed as that of the noble animal which combined the best characteristics of the brute kingdom, hence the Jolly Corks became the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

The new society with great forethought at once created a grand lodge and elected the following officers on February 16, 1868: R. H. primo, Charles A. S. Vivian; first deputy primo, R. R. Steirly; honorary secretary, Charles Carleton; treasurer, H. Vandermark; tiler, William Sheppard.

The purposes for which the new order was created were briefly and clearly set forth in the following terse document: "The undersigned members of the theatrical, musical, equestrian and literary professions, and others who are in sympathy with and approve the object in view, do hereby organize an order to promote, protect and enhance the welfare and happiness of each other." Volumes could not have said more.

There were two degrees in the original society, the social and the ritual, and a candidate must be in the social before he could be advanced to the ritual.

In the same manner every meeting was divided into two parts, the business and social, hence the Elks are the most perfect entertainers of any order on earth.

From the inception of the order the lodge consisting of fifteen members grew until in 1871 it was found essential to their well being to organize a high executive body for the more complete facilitation of business. This new branch lodge was organized in New York on February 12th, and the first grand lodge officers were elected and installed. G. J. Green was made exalted grand

ruler; Tony Pastor, esteemed leading grand knight; S. K. Spencer, esteemed royal grand knight; Cool White, grand lecturer; E. G. Browne, grand secretary; Hugh B. O'Neill, grand treasurer; Fernando Pastor, grand tiler; T. G. Riggs, J. C. Pinckney and William Korff, judiciary committee.

It was at a meeting of this body one week later that the constitution of the grand lodge was adopted, the constitution as it now is with but slight changes.

From that lodge of fifteen members, the growth, at first slow, spread rapidly after the year 1874, when there were two lodges with 200 members; in 1878 eleven lodges with 787 members; in 1888 ninety lodges with 8952 members, and in 1898 there were 428 lodges with 48,187 members, and every State in the Union represented. At the gathering last year at Milwaukee there were represented in the grand lodge 710 lodges with 90,000 members. There will be represented at the Salt Lake grand lodge this year about 783 lodges with a total membership of over 100,000 members, but three lodges out of the 786 now in existence will fail to be in attendance.

Although the Elks is not an insurance order and does not issue policies to members, it makes every effort to care for the families of its deceased members and needs of suffering brothers, and has dispersed over \$1,000,000 for these purposes. The order also stands in the foremost ranks of philanthropists in every public calamity, regardless of whether the sufferers are members of its order or not, nor does sect, creed, condition, or color enter into the consideration when a strong hand, a long purse or a warm heart is needed to alleviate the sufferings of humanity. The charity of the order is proverbial.

Wherever the cry of distress reaches the ear of an Elk, an outstretched hand softened by sympathy and love is extended to the needy brother or his bereaved loved ones. The Johnstown sufferers, the Seaford stricken, the victims of fire and flood throughout the land have tasted the sweets of Elks' benefactions, while the individual cases sought and aided are as countless as the stars. The order is one in spirit and in truth, and from

the snow-capped heights of lofty Shasta to the vine-clad vales of the sunny South, from the rocky peaks of old Maine to the land where the sweet magnolia blossoms the sacred spirit of the order makes the Elks one.

On the roll of membership of the B. P. O. E. are the names of United States Senators, legislators, Congressmen, statesmen, merchants, journalists, lawyers, doctors, and the leading representatives in the world of music and art, literature and the drama, and today this glorious country is spanned by a chain of clasped hands which link state to state, and even reach out to the islands of the Orient, which reach out to the call of distress regardless of creed, denomination, color or spiritual belief. From the cradle to the grave, aye, even across the dark river, the love of the kindly Elk guides the steps of his brothers and their loved ones, with malice toward none and with charity for all.

Humanity is the keynote of the Elks.

Among all the impressive ceremonies of the Elk lodges there is none which outranks the annual lodge of sorrow. This ceremony was first instituted at a meeting of the first lodge in New York in 1870. In February of that year Brother George E. Farmer passed over the divide, and a memorial service was held out of respect to the departed brother. When a week later the death of Brother James W. Glenn was reported, it was decided to hold a lodge of sorrow, and on March 20, 1870, the first ceremonial lodge of sorrow was held. George R. Thompson was then R. H. primo and conducted the ceremonies, which were as follows:

1. Voluntary on the Organ, by Bro. F. C. Alden.
2. Anthem, by Bros. Brandise, Rockefeller, Russell and Shattuck.
3. Prayer, by the Rev. Samuel B. Willis.
4. Plezel's Hymn, by Bros. Brandise, Rockefeller, Russell and Shattuck.
5. Eulogy on the late Bro. Frank Preston, by Bro. Cool White. (Written by Bro. George J. Green.)
6. Quartette, Sacred, Rock of Ages, by Bros. Brandise, Rockefeller, Shattuck and Russell.
7. Eulogy on the late Bro. James W. Lingard.



ELKS' LODGE ROOM.